

Margaret Petersen
Internship Report
Summer 2013
Walrus Advertising
New York, NY

This summer, I had the opportunity to intern at Walrus in New York City. Located on Union Square, Walrus is full-service, boutique advertising agency. While the agency has worked with some clients for many years, Walrus can also be hired for specific campaigns. More permanent clients include CW-X, Emergen-C, Bazooka and Bloomberg Business Week. Earlier in the year, Walrus owned the advertising for Banana Republic's Milly line. Recently acquired clients include Time Warner Cable and Staples.

Walrus' responsibilities as an ad agency range from creating and maintaining the website to producing catalogs to managing the client's Facebook page. With two teams within one office, creative and account managing, the agency is able to do most of their work in-house, and office life is always busy and changing. Although working mostly with the account team as an account management intern, the agency's small size allowed me to see a campaign's process from start to finish, from introductory research to production.

I worked mostly on the Emergen-C and CW-X accounts. Emergen-C is a dietary supplement drink mix – available in multiple flavors – sold as an energy booster, and it has a reputation for supporting immune system health. Even though the brand doesn't endorse the message that the drink mix treats colds, many of its fans contend that's why they continue using Emergen-C. My primary role was to create competitive and noncompetitive reports for the client.

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For competitive reports, I mostly researched the competing brands' Facebook pages. The primary competitors Emergen-C focuses on are Airborne, Ester-C, Cold-EEZE and Zicam. I looked at which posts were most popular, and engagement types (comments versus likes versus shares) on each post. The goal was to analyze how each brand utilizes social media to acquire a fan base. Emergen-C respectively led the group of competitors, and Airborne held the second spot. At the end of the quarter, Walrus compiles a newsletter of findings. As the summer intern, I created the second quarter newsletter and researched for the third quarter newsletter.

Non-competitive reports, which aren't brand specific, studied how brands used the social media space. As with the competitive reports, noncompetitive reports were newsletters reporting the revolutionary ways brands were utilizing social media space via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and Vine. The most valuable sources were Adage.com, Adweek.com and PSFK.com. The most striking social media campaign I came across this summer was Pepsi's vending machine that traded Facebook likes for a Pepsi. The number of likes acquired from the machine is unavailable as it has now been set up throughout the world since its debut at Beyonce's concert in Antwerp, Belgium. Competitive reports, though, were produced for the client every month, allowing me to create two on Walrus' behalf.

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Rather than researching how brands utilize the social media space, my work with the CW-X account reflected different responsibilities of an advertising agency. The brand describes its clothing as “kinesiologically-engineered apparel.” That is, it is “anatomically-precise conditioning wear designed to enhance the body’s performance, from warm-up to recovery.” Bi-annually, the brand attends an Outdoor Retailer Show, a meeting of retailers, manufacturers and suppliers or outdoor industry professionals at trade shows, in Salt Lake City. As the brand’s advertising agency, it is Walrus’ job to create a presentation of the brand’s apparel and advertisements, digital and/or print. This summer, I created the presentation for the Summer OR show. For the brand website, I assisted in picking the photos for each product in the next site update. Walrus also agreed to begin producing the brand’s catalog during my time spent at Walrus, and the expected production date is later this fall.

Interning for an advertising agency provides unparalleled research experience. Future interns for Walrus can expect to expand the ways they research, analyze why a piece of information proves more significant than another, and finally deliver the findings in a directly written report or presentation. My opportunity with Walrus expanded necessary skills (writing and research) for law school, and living in New York City confirmed my desire to practice law in a big city.